

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 IO-13 ACDA-07 SSM-03 /079 W
-----271242Z 011071 /53

R 271131Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5888
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY CAMASCUS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, IS
SUBJECT: DAYAN WILL BE ACTIVE IN ALIGNMENT CAMPAIGN;
RUMORED TO HEAD JEWISH AGENCY

REF: TEL AVIV 2500

1. MOSHE DAYAN CONTINUES TO GENERATE CONTROVERSY AND HEADLINES. AFTER INDICATING THAT HE MIGHT SIT ON HIS HANDS DURING THIS CAMPAIGN, DESPITE HIS HIGH POSITION ON THE ALIGNMENT LIST, AND HINTING AT THE POSSIBILITY OF COLLABORATING WITH THE LIKUD AFTER THE ELECTION, HE ANNOUNCED APRIL 25 THAT HE WILL ACTIVELY CAMPAIGN FOR THE ALIGNMENT--BEGINNING AFTER HIS RETURN FROM A EUROPEAN TRIP ON MAY 5.

2. THIS LATEST ZIG-ZAG IN HIS POLITICAL COURSE CAME IN THE MIDST OF A SPATE OF CRITICAL PRESS COMMENT OVER HIS BEHAVIOR SINCE THE LABOR PARTY CONVENTION. HAVING TRIED UNSUCCESSFULLY TO AMEND THE LABOR PARTY
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PLATFORM IN A DRAMATIC FLOOR-FLIGHT AT THE CONVENTION, DAYAN HAD SEPARATE TALKS WITH MENAHEM BEGIN, ARIK SHARON AND MORDACHI BEN-PORAT. HE GAVE EVERY INDICATING THAT LEAVING THE LABOR PARTY OVER ITS WEST BANK PLATFORM PLANK WAS UPPERMOST IN HIS MIND. THIS WAS ENOUGH TO PROMPT SOME 30 LABOR PARTY LEADERS

TO SIGN A PLEDGE TO HIM ADVOCATING ELECTIONS PRIOR TO ANY WEST BANK RETROCESSION, SHOULD THIS BE DEMANDED BY A PROSPECTIVE PARTNER TO A FUTURE LABOR-LED COALITION (REFTEL. IT IS RELIABLY REPORTED THAT THE DRIVING FORCE BEHIND THE PLEDGE TO DAYAN WAS PERES HIMSELF, ALTHOUGH AT THE TIME HE WAS STILL NUMBER TWO IN THE ALIGNMENT. DAYAN RESPONDED TO THE WOOING BY ANNOUNCING THAT HE WOULD STICK WITH LABOR AND, AGAIN THANKS MAINLY TO PERES' EFFORTS, HE WAS GIVEN THE RELATIVELY HIGH SEVENTH POSITION ON THE ALIGNMENT LIST.

3. THEN CAME THE RABIN RESIGNATION AND NEW DECISIONS ON THE PARTY LEADERSHIP. DAYAN STRONGLY OPPOSED THE PERES COMMITMENTS TO ALLON AND EBAN WHICH VIRTUALLY GUARANTEE THEM THE DEFENSE AND FOREIGN PORTFOLIOS, RESPECTIVELY. HE REGARDS THEM AS TOO DOVISH AND, MOREOVER, HE IS A LONGTIME RIVAL OF ALLON. ON THE FINAL DAY OF FILING FOR KNESSET, DAYAN AGAIN TURNED TO THE LIKUD, CONTEMPLATING A LAST MINUTE SWITCH (TEL AVIV 2608). HIS SECOND OVERTURE TO THE OPPOSITION INFURIATED PARTY LEADERS (PARTICULARLY PERES WHO REGARDED THE MOVE AS AN INSULT), AND HIS HINTS OF A POST-ELECTION TIE-IN WITH THE LIKUD INCREASED THEIR ANGER.

4. LAST WEEK A STORY CIRCULATED THAT DAYAN WAS BEING CONSIDERED FOR THE POST OF CHAIRMAN OF THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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JEWISH AGENCY WHEN THE CURRENT CHAIRMAN'S (JOSEPH ALMOGI) TERM EXPIRES IN FEBRUARY 1978. PERES REPORTEDLY FAVORS THE MOVE, BUT THERE IS NO WORD ON DAYAN'S REACTION. HIS NOMINATION WOULD CLEARLY BE AN ATTEMPT TO DEFUSE AND SIDE-TRACK HIM FROM ISRAELI INTERNAL POLITICS AND IT IS QUESTIONABLE WHETHER HE WOULD ACCEPT. HOWEVER, GIVEN HIS POPULARITY WITH DIASPORA JEWRY AND THE CONTINUED (ALBEIT REDUCED) VITALITY OF THE DAYAN MYTH OUTSIDE OF ISRAEL, HE COULD BE AN EXCELLENT CHOICE.

5. THE JEWISH AGENCY CHAIRMANSHIP ASIDE, IT IS DOUBTFUL WHETHER PERES WOULD BE ABLE TO GIVE DAYAN ANY POSITION OF POWER WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT OR PARTY, EVEN IF HE SO WANTED. DESPITE DAYAN'S PROMISE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ALIGNMENT'S CAMPAIGN, HE HAS STILL NOT MADE HIS PEACE WITH THE LABOR PARTY. THE QUESTION WHETHER HIS

INFLUENCE HAD INCREASED WITH PERES' ELEVATION
TO PARTY LEADERSHIP (UNTIL RECENTLY PERES WAS
VIEWED AS DAYAN'S PROTEGE') APPEARS TO HAVE
BEEN ANSWERED IN THE NEGATIVE--AT LEAST FOR THE
TIME BEING. ON THE OTHER HAND, EVEN AS A MEMBER
OF THE ALIGNMENT, DAYAN REMAINS A POTENTIAL
RALLYING POINT FOR ANY FUTURE CAMPAIGN AGAINST
WEST BANK CONCESSIONS. HIS POLITICAL FUTURE
REMAINS CLOUDY; IN THE FINALY ANALYSIS THIS
UNCERTAINTY IS BECAUSE HIS REAL POWER AMONG
THE ELECTORATE IS UNKNOWN. ALTHOUGH VILIFIED BY
MANY FOR THE YOM KIPPUR WAR LOSSES, MOST WOULD
CONCEDE THAT THERE IS STILL SOME MAGIC IN HIS
NAME AND THE ALIGNMENT HAS DONE MORE TO KEEP HIM
THAN IT WOULD HAVE FOR ALMOST ANY OTHER MEMBER.
DUNNIGAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 27-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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